

First Cornwallis Baptist Church



COVID-19 Prevention Plan

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Reviewed and Approved by the Deacons Board

of First Cornwallis Baptist Church

Contents

PREAMBLE _____	3
PURPOSE _____	4
DEFINITION OF TERMS _____	5
THE PLAN _____	6
A. Communication _____	6
B. Pre-Screening Measures _____	7
C. Physical Distancing Measures _____	8
D. Cleaning/Sanitization Measures _____	9
E. Musicians, Vocalists, Singing, & Public Speaking Measures _____	9
F. Illness Response & Management _____	10
CONCLUSION _____	11

PREAMBLE

- Whereas the Government of Nova Scotia has moved into the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic and, as of July 3, 2020, have permitted the operation of faith-based gatherings;
- Whereas First Cornwallis Baptist Church recognizes the risk that COVID-19 presents to our community, and therefore the necessity of developing and implementing a prevention Plan to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to ensure the safety of any and all Participants, Staff, and Volunteers, as well as their households and families; and
- Whereas First Cornwallis Baptist Church seeks to comply with the necessary and recommended guidelines of the Nova Scotia Chief Medical Officer of Health as well as Public Health regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and commit to doing everything in our power to assist Public Health in handling the COVID-19 crisis, including taking all necessary steps towards identifying and reducing the risk of exposure within our context;

We, the Deacons Board of First Cornwallis Baptist Church, agree to adopt, implement, and abide by the following COVID-19 Prevention Plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members, visitors, Staff, and Volunteers during the duration of our Church operations and Functions including, but not limited to: regular Sunday services, special services, Board meetings, business meetings, weddings, funerals, Bible studies, youth groups, and small groups.

PURPOSE

This COVID-19 Prevention Plan (“the Plan”) is hereby submitted to the Deacons Board (“the Board”) of First Cornwallis Baptist Church (“the Church”) for the purpose of review, adaption, training, implementation, and adherence to all Church operations and Functions. This Plan aims to cover proper procedures for communication, screening, personal hygiene, cleaning and/or sanitization, social interaction between persons, and action Plans in the event of a suspected case. Every individual who is involved with and/or responsible for assisting with Church operations, including Staff, Volunteers, and members will be briefed on the Plan and will be expected to adhere to it in the interest of public safety and protecting one another from any risk associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

With guidance from the Church leadership, this Plan is ultimately subject to the majority vote and confidence of the members of the Board of the Church. The Plan is not to be altered, amended, or communicated to other parties without the prior approval of the Board. Any suggestions for alterations, amendments, or communication strategies will be discussed by the Board before adoption and implementation.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **The Board:** The Deacons Board of First Cornwallis Baptist Church.
- **The Church:** First Cornwallis Baptist Church.
- **Clerk:** Dianne Rafuse-Bennett (902-690-5425)
- **Chair of the Board:** Gladys Starratt (902-678-2030)
- **COVID-19:** the disease caused by the novel coronavirus. Symptoms for this disease may include, but are not limited to: fever (chills, sweats), cough or worsening of a previous cough, sore throat, headache, shortness of breath, muscle aches, sneezing, nasal congestion or runny nose, hoarse voice, diarrhea, unusual fatigue, loss of sense of smell or taste, and red, purple or blueish lesions on the feet, toes or fingers without clear cause.
- **Deputy Treasurers:** Dianne Rafuse-Bennett & Betty MacCumber
- **Function:** any event which takes place at the Church building. This includes, but is not limited to: regular Sunday services, special services, Board meetings, business meetings, weddings, funerals, Bible studies, youth groups, and small groups.
- **Participants:** any member of or visitor to the Church who chooses to participate in any Church Function. Participants may also include Volunteers and Staff.
- **Physical Distancing (a.k.a. Social Distancing):** the act of maintaining a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) between two or more people.
- **The Plan:** The Church's COVID-19 Prevention Plan.
- **Self-Isolation:** the requirement of any person who has COVID-19 to remain separate from others in such places and under such conditions to prevent or limit the direct or indirect transmission of COVID-19. This Self-Isolation must take place for a minimum of 14 consecutive days.
- **Self-Quarantine:** the requirement of any person who has been exposed or may have been exposed to COVID-19 during its period of communicability to restrict that person's activities in order to prevent disease transmission during the incubation period for this disease. This self-quarantine must take place for a minimum of 14 consecutive days.
- **Senior Pastor:** Lic. Stephen Wheaton (902-582-7364)
- **Staff:** those employed by the Church. This includes, but is not limited to: pastoral Staff and organists.
- **Treasurer:** Joshua Lohnes (902-880-6442)
- **Volunteer:** an individual who has agreed to assist in Church Functions in various capacities. This includes, but is not limited to: collecting and/or counting offerings, operating sound/electronics, repairs to the Church building, being a member of a Board of the Church (i.e. Trustees, Christian Education, Deacons, etc.), leading a small group or Bible study, and singing with choral group.

THE PLAN

A. Communication

1. Signage for proper handwashing procedures will be posted in all washrooms and nearby all handwashing sinks;
2. Signage which summarizes symptoms of COVID-19 will be posted at entrances to the Church building and will indicate that if anyone is experiencing these symptoms to leave and not return until after proper Self-Isolation;
3. Signage will be posted stating that Physical Distancing must take place while inside the Church building;
4. Signage will be posted which states that all Participants must wear a non-medical mask while inside the building, unless they have a valid medical reason, in accordance with regulations from Nova Scotia Public Health;
5. All posted signage will be taken from: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/resources/>; and
6. All safety measures and precautions, as well as a copy of the Plan, will be posted on our Church website and Facebook page.

B. Pre-Screening Measures

1. Any Staff or Volunteer who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to not work until after proper Self-Isolation. A substitute deemed acceptable by the Board will be used in their place;
2. A Staff or Volunteer will be at the entrance to the building and will perform pre-screenings of all Participants entering the Church building;
3. During a pre-screening, the Staff or Volunteer will ask the following questions to the Participant:
 - a. Is the Participant sick or feeling symptomatic?
 - b. Has the Participant travelled outside Atlantic Canada within the last 14 days?
 - c. Has the Participant had close contact with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19?
 - d. Is the Participant awaiting results of a COVID-19 test?

Participants will be asked to provide a verbal answer to the above questions;

4. If the Participant answers “yes” to any of the above questions, they will be politely asked to leave and not return until proper Self-Isolation has occurred; and
5. If the Participant is not a member of the Church, they must provide their contact information to the Staff or Volunteer so they can be notified of a suspected case. Contact information must include:
 - a. Full name (first and last);
 - b. Date of attendance;
 - c. Telephone number;
 - d. Email address; and
 - e. Civic address.

This information will be given to the Clerk to use if there is a suspected case.

C. Physical Distancing Measures

1. The Church building will not exceed 50% of its maximum capacity in any room or up to 200 people, whichever is less;
2. Pews will be marked and/or taped off to ensure proper Physical Distancing;
3. Only one Participant/family unit will be allowed in the entrance vestibule at a time (except for the Staff or Volunteer member performing pre-screenings);
4. Only one Participant will be allowed into the washrooms at a time;
5. Traditional greeting measures (i.e. handshakes, hugs, etc.) will be strongly discouraged;
6. Collection of offering/tithes will be done by individuals placing their offerings/tithes into a collection plate at the back of the sanctuary. These offerings will be counted by exactly three tellers in the Rand Room, of which the Treasurer and/or a Deputy Treasurer must be one;
7. The floor of the sanctuary will be taped in 2 metre (6 foot) sections to ensure proper Physical Distancing. The sanctuary will also be considered one-way traffic flow with arrows pointing towards the appropriate direction;
8. A Staff or Volunteer will usher Participants/family units to their seats to ensure proper Physical Distancing;
9. The Nursery will be closed until such a time as Public Health and/or the Chief Medical Officer of Health advises the Board it can re-open;
10. The driveway will be marked with paint or other appropriate measure to ensure 2 metre (6 foot) distancing between Participants entering the Church building; and
11. Communion will be temporarily ceased until such a time as Public Health and/or the Chief Medical Officer of Health advises the Board we can resume.

D. Cleaning/Sanitization Measures

1. All high-contact surfaces and equipment (i.e. microphones, door handles, pews, etc.) in the Church building will be disinfected before every Function. Depending on the length of the Function, they will also be disinfected a minimum of once every two hours;
2. All frequently used doors in the Church building will be left open during a Function to ensure minimal contact with door handles. All doors will be locked when not in use;
3. Hand sanitizer will be readily available at the main entrance/exit of the Church building. Participants will be encouraged to use this as they enter the Church building;
4. Disposable non-medical masks will be available at the entrance of the Church building for those who do not bring one;
5. Washrooms will be disinfected before and after every Function. Depending on the length of the Function, they will also be disinfected a minimum of once every two hours;
6. All handwashing sinks and/or washrooms will be properly stocked with soap, water, paper towels, and no-touch trash cans; and
7. All disinfecting will be done with certified disinfectants which have been approved by Public Health to eliminate coronavirus.

E. Musicians, Vocalists, Singing, & Public Speaking Measures

1. A physical distance of at least 4 metres (12 feet) will be maintained between musicians, vocalists and/or public speakers (i.e. organist, pastoral Staff) and Participants;
2. Musicians will face away from Participants when performing;
3. All choral groups will not be allowed to perform until such a time as deemed acceptable by Public Health and/or the Chief Medical Officer of Health;
4. Participant singing will only be deemed acceptable when the Participant who is singing is wearing a non-medical mask. Humming will be suggested as an alternative to singing;
5. Microphones will not be shared between Staff and/or Volunteers; and
6. All hymnals, Bibles, and chorus books will be removed from the sanctuary.

F. Illness Response & Management

1. In the event a Participant who starts to feel unwell or becomes sick or symptomatic during a Function, that Participant must notify a Staff or Volunteer immediately;
2. That Participant must immediately perform the following:
 - a. Wash their hands at a handwashing sink;
 - b. Put on a non-medical mask if they do not already have one on;
 - c. Avoid contact with others; and
 - d. Go home and Self-Isolate.
 - i. If a Participant is waiting for a mode of transportation to go home, the Staff or Volunteer that was notified must escort (while maintaining physical distance) and isolate the Participant in the Prayer Room of the Church building until their mode of transportation arrives. This is to be done immediately after the Participant washes their hands and puts on a non-medical mask. Once their mode of transportation arrives, the Participant must immediately leave the building, enter their mode of transportation, go home and Self-Isolate.
 - ii. If the Participant is underage, the Staff or Volunteer must bring the Participant's parent/guardian with them to supervise their child until their mode of transportation arrives.
3. Once the Participant has left the property, the Staff or Volunteer that was notified must immediately wash their hands, put on a non-medical mask if they do not already have one on, and inform the Senior Pastor or Chair of the Board that there is suspected case of COVID-19 in the building;
4. The Senior Pastor or Chair of the Board will instruct all Participants, Staff, and Volunteers to leave the building, go home and Self-Isolate;
5. The Senior Pastor or Chair or the Board will immediately contact Public Health using the appropriate telephone number;
6. Signage will be placed on all entrances to the Church building which communicates the potential illness case and directs anyone who exhibits symptoms to call 811;
7. The Clerk will provide contact information for all Participants, Staff, and Volunteers of the Function to Public Health for review;
8. All Functions that were to be held at the Church will be cancelled for the remainder of the year. The only exception to this is if Public Health and/or the Chief Medical Officer of Health advise the Board that it is safe to reopen; and
9. Should the Board become aware of a possible symptomatic Participant after a Function has ended, the Illness Response & Management procedures outlined above will be taken immediately.

CONCLUSION

The ability to reduce the spread of COVID-19 is directly connected to the ability of the general public to take the appropriate measures to ensure their safety. This includes Physical Distancing, wearing a non-medical mask, and staying home if you feel unwell. We are all in this together and can emerge from this pandemic stronger as a result of it. If you or anyone in your household are experiencing symptoms or are generally feeling unwell, we strongly encourage you to stay home until your symptoms subside. If your symptoms are consistent with those associated with COVID-19, please call 811 in order to be tested and Self-Isolate for 14 days. Furthermore, if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19, please call 811 and inform the Senior Pastor or Chair of the Board so we can take appropriate action.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Plan. We hope that it reflects our commitment to our community and to God. We want to ensure that everyone has a safe experience at our Church. God bless you and may He continue to keep us in His care.